

Forest Sector Workgroup on Climate Change Mitigation Group Charter (April, 2008)

I. Authority

E2SHB 2815 Section 4(3)(g) directed the Department of Ecology and the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development to develop recommendations “in consultation with the department of natural resources and the department of agriculture with the climate advisory team, the college of forest resources at the University of Washington, Washington State University, and a nonprofit consortium involved in research on renewable industrial materials regarding how forestry and agricultural lands and practices may participate voluntarily as an offset or other credit program in the regional multi-sector market-based system being designed by the departments in association with the Western Climate Initiative. The recommendations must ensure that the baseline for this offset or credit program does not disadvantage this state in relation to another state or states. These recommendations shall address:

- (i) Commercial and other working forests, including accounting for site-class specific forest management practices;
- (ii) Agricultural and forest products, including accounting for substitution of wood for fossil intensive substitutes;
- (iii) Agricultural land and practices;
- (iv) Forest and agricultural lands set aside or managed for conservation as of, or after, the effective date of this section; and
- (v) Reforestation and afforestation projects.”

II. Sponsorship, Purpose and Coordination

The forestry working group is being jointly sponsored by the Washington State Departments of Ecology and Natural Resources.

The purpose of the forestry working group is to provide the forum for stakeholders and government representatives, with the assistance of the entities named above, to potentially develop recommendations to the Departments of Ecology and Natural Resources to meet the intent of the legislation. In so doing, this group may also serve to discuss, develop, and make potential recommendations concerning “most promising” proposals in the forestry sector as found in the February, 2008 report of the Governor’s Climate Advisory Team, entitled “Leading the Way on Climate Change: The Challenge of Our Time.”

To the extent the forestry working group develops plans for quantified emission reductions for any of the most promising recommendations of the Climate Advisory Team, the CAT will have shared responsibility as to the scope and status of those recommendations.

To the greatest extent feasible, the sponsors desire that the recommendations on the market-based system be consensus recommendations developed by this group. To the

extent consensus is not achieved, the recommendations may go forward to Ecology and DNR as majority/minority recommendations for which the full group explanation of minority positions and their rationale is provided.

This will be the only Washington State multi-stakeholder group established by the Sponsors for this topic. Sponsors understand that there are or may be similar multi-stakeholder groups regarding forest sector participation in multi-sector market-based systems in other western States and Canadian Provinces. It is the intention of the Sponsors that this group's work be coordinated with the work of those related groups in a way that is feasible, timely, efficient, transparent, and productive.

III. Scope of the Group's Work

The scope of this group's work may include the following elements:

- General principles regarding the role of Washington forests in achieving Washington greenhouse gas goals, consistent with E2SHB 2815.
- Specific design elements appropriate to one or more regional or other multi-sector, market-based systems, including robust measurement, accounting, and verification systems.
- A diverse range of potential project types that may be suitable for consideration within one or more market-based systems.
- Specific consideration of "most promising" CAT strategies, including improved forest health, reduced conversion to non-forest cover, expanded urban and community forests, expanded use of wood products for building materials, and improved commercialization of advanced lignocellulosic processes.
- If this group chooses to consider the role of production of woody biomass for energy, it shall be appropriately guided by Section 3(3) of E2SHB 2815, which says "Except for purposes of reporting, emissions of carbon dioxide from industrial combustion of biomass in the form of fuel wood, wood waste, wood byproducts, and wood residuals shall not be considered a greenhouse gas as long as the region's silvicultural sequestration capacity is maintained or increased."

IV. Responsibilities of Participants

Invitees are expected to represent the interests of their organizations, and bring a strategic, policy-oriented perspective to benefit the group. Invitees are expected to make every effort to participate in all group meetings and activities, including participating electronically. Designees may be explicitly named to the group as substitutes for the invitees. Invitees and designees will make every possible effort to ensure that designees are well prepared to participate in the group's ongoing work processes, so that progress is maintained. Other organization representatives are welcome to attend meetings as observers in the absence of the organization's invited member (See below.)

Meetings will be open to the public. Observers will not participate in the deliberation of the group unless invited by the group. Meetings will be announced on the Department of Ecology Climate Website. Work products of the group will also be posted to this site. The sponsors will assure that at each meeting a time will be allowed for public comment. The group's recommendations will be made available for public comment.

V. General Approach

The general strategy the group will use to meet its objectives will be as follows:

- Agency-assisted collaborative discussions among all participants at a series of regularly-scheduled meetings, as well as between-meeting homework, sub-group work, and research, and drafting of group documents, indicating degree of consensus and nature of any significant disagreements. An objective is to provide in-depth, nuanced input to decision-makers on the most important matters for group participants.

The Sponsors expect the group and its individual members to consider the following guidelines in communications, including communications among group members, with Sponsors and their designees, and with external parties:

- Be mutually respectful;
- Be honest about one's own or one's group's core values, interests, and goals;
- Avoid attributing positions or motives to other parties in communicating externally;
- Communicate externally as a group as much as possible, for example through periodic agreed-on statements of progress;
- Use commonly used collaborative communication guidelines.

The process the group uses should serve to bring out group members' important and relevant values, interests, and objectives, and those of the organizations they represent, so that shared values, interests, and objectives can be identified, and so that principled disagreements can surface clearly and be explicitly discussed by the group, with the purpose of achieving the greatest possible group agreement on objectives related to the work of the group, and so that remaining interest-based disagreements can be fully understood by all group members.

This working group is expected to attempt to make group decisions by consensus where feasible, including decisions on group recommendations. However, non-consensus decisions are acceptable providing the group as a whole explains the nature of any disagreements and their rationale.

VI. Approach to Technical/Scientific/Market Information

The Sponsors intend that group members avail themselves of technical and scientific information pertinent to the work of the group, in a way that is agreeable to all group members, meets the purpose of the group as outlined in this charter, is efficient, and promotes the greatest possible group agreement on technical and scientific matters. As part of the group's dialog, critical areas of technical and scientific agreement should be documented and any major technical/scientific disagreements should also be explicitly identified, with an explanation of the disagreement and what was done to resolve it. The implications of any technical or scientific disagreement for the group's recommendations, consensus or otherwise, should be explained in the group's recommendations.

VII. Time Schedule

Major Milestones

There may be some interim milestones the forestry work group may need to focus on providing input to the state as WCI proceeds in developing a multi-sectored market-based system for reducing green house gases.

November 1, 2008 – Final recommendations to the Departments of Ecology & Natural Resources, including recommendations for legislation, if needed.

Meeting frequency

April through August – Monthly (with additional sub-group work between meetings)

September to November – Twice-monthly, if possible and necessary (with additional sub-group work as needed).

Meetings will generally be 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM with the option of a working lunch.

Meetings will initially be planned in the Olympia, Seattle, or elsewhere in the central Puget Sound area.

Meetings will be in-person, with a call-in option.

Meeting co-conveners – Craig Partridge (DNR) & Stephen Bernath (Ecology)